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3rd rewrite

NRO, USAF DECLASSIFICATION/RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS ON FILE

OX CART INFORMATION

I. Brief History

A. Program Go-ahead

1. Design and Model - 29 August 1959

2. Fabrication - 8 February 1960

B. First Flight - 26 April 1962

C. First Mach 3.2 Flight - 27 November 1963

D. Operational date, Mach 2.8 - 5 November 1964

E. Operational date, Mach 3.2 - 1 December 1965

F. Number of flights as of 29 February 1968 - 2731

G. Number of aircraft as of 15 March 1968:

1. Operationally ready	5
2. Test aircraft	1
3. Trainer aircraft	1
4. Aircraft in storage	2
Total	9

2nd rewrite
not attached

1st memo

1st memo

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8826-68

destroyed

2nd rewrite
attached

3rd rewrite
final

filed
O+M
Historical
Inhouse

II. Phase-out History and Related Events

A. At the request of the Bureau of the Budget, the BOB/DOD/CIA study of the OXCART A-12/USAF SR-71 aircraft programs was accomplished in 1966. The purpose of the study was to make an appraisal of the fleets, requirements and alternatives relating to the fleet size, including consolidation of assets and storing some aircraft for budgetary considerations. In December 1966 after consideration of several alternatives and the combined

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aircraft fleet size, a Presidential decision was made to mothball and store the A-12 aircraft effective 31 December 1967, with all reconnaissance missions being assigned to the SAC SR-71 fleet under Air Force management.

- B. In May 1967, a Presidential decision was made to deploy the A-12 to Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, for reconnaissance overflights of North Vietnam for the primary purpose of detecting the introduction of surface-to-surface missiles into the country.
- C. Since the initial decision to terminate, the OXCART program has been extended twice at the recommendation of the EXCOM of the NRP to allow for further refinement of the SR-71 operational readiness posture. Each extension was for a three month period; the first was announced on 23 October 1967 and the second on 29 December 1967.
- D. SR-71 aircraft have been deployed to Kadena and on 15 March 1968 SAC assumes responsibility for the North Vietnam reconnaissance mission. The OXCART A-12 aircraft will remain at Kadena at least 30 days to provide a contingency overlap capability, after which they will be returned to the United States.
- E. The OXCART program now is scheduled to maintain an operational posture through 30 June 1968, after which the aircraft will be stored and the program terminated.

III. OXCART Deployment Status

- A. Date OXCART directed to deploy to Kadena - 16 May 1967
- B. Date deployment completed - 26 May 1967
- C. Operationally-ready date after deployment - 28 May 1967
- D. First operational mission - 31 May 1967
- E. Tentative redeployment date - 15 April 1968

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F. Operational mission summary as of 15 March 1968:

1. Missions flown - 23

24 North Vietnam (47 photo flight lines)

2 Cambodia (4 photo flight lines)

2 North Korea (5 photo flight lines)

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DD/SA:JP/hk

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8 March 1968

Chiono
Destroy
2 not rewritten
Rewritten

MEMORANDUM FOR: Comptroller, DD/S&T

SUBJECT: OXCART Information

REFERENCE: Memorandum for Comptroller/DDS&T from
Comptroller/OSA dated 7 March 1968,
Same Subject ██████████ 8826-68)

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destroyed

Attached hereto is correction of information attached
to the referent memorandum. It is requested that all
copies of ██████████ 8826-68 be returned to the Comptroller's
Office, Office of Special Activities.

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Comptroller
Office of Special Activities

Attachment

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downgrading and
declassification

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- 6 - BPD Chrono
- 7 - RB/OSA

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| 4. Aircraft in Storage | - | <u>2</u> |
| | | 9 |

II. Phase-out History

- A. During 1966 a BOB/DOD/CIA study of OXCART A-12/USAF SR-71 aircraft programs was accomplished. In December 1966 after consideration of several alternatives and the combined aircraft fleet size, a Presidential decision was made to mothball the A-12 fleet effective 31 December 1967 with the SAC SR-71 program assuming

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responsibility for maintaining reconnaissance capability in Southeast Asia.

- B. In May 1967 a Presidential decision was made to deploy the A-12 to Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, for primary purpose of overflight of North Vietnam.
- C. Since that time the decision to terminate the OXCART program has been extended twice at the recommendation of the EXCOM of the NRP to allow for further refinement of the SR-71 operational readiness posture. Each extension was for a three-month period. The first was announced on 23 October 1967 and the second on 29 December 1967.
- D. The SR-71 is scheduled to deploy to Kadena and to be ready to assume primary responsibility for North Vietnam missions by about 15 March 1968. The OXCART A-12 aircraft will remain at Kadena until 30 days after the SR-71 assumes responsibility, after which it will be redeployed to the United States.
- E. The OXCART program is now scheduled to maintain an operational readiness through 30 June 1968, after which the aircraft will be stored and the program terminated.

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